CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Cummings Hauling Inc HRA 27-B-47250 Alternative Practice
Proposed Implementation Date: August 12, 2019
Proponent: Ron Cummings
Location: SW/4 of section 22, T27N R30W (48°05'07.22"N 115°27'17.79"W)
County: Lincoln

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

To allow the operation of wheeled or tracked equipment in an adjacent wetland in the summer. The proposed action would construct a low impact skid trail across 20 feet of adjacent wetland to access an island of timber that is surrounded by said wetland. The wetland crossing would allow for skidding equipment access to about 2 acres of land.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. List number of individuals contacted, number of responses received, and newspapers in which notices were placed and for how long. Briefly summarize issues received from the public.

No adjacent landowners are expected to be affected by the proposal so public scoping was not deemed necessary.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Examples: cost-share agreement with U.S. Forest Service, 124 Permit, 3A Authorization, Air Quality Major Open Burning Permit.

None

3. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

Describe alternatives considered and, if applicable, provide brief description of how the alternatives were developed. List alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis and why.

No action alternative: Do not harvest this island of timber

Action alternatives considered: 1) construct access road with culvert and fill to cross wetland. 2) construct temporary crossing to skid logs from island across 20 feet of wetland to landing and obliterate crossing.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to soils.

Kootenai Land Type 112; this soil type is lacustrian deposits capable of high timber productivity yet is susceptible to rutting when wet due to lack of rock. Seeding these areas promptly after disturbance helps to ensure successful revegetation.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources.

An adjacent wetland (associated with Class 1 Miller Creek) would be crossed with a skid trail for 20 feet to reach an island of timbered land. This practice would be authorized under winter conditions as the proposed crossing is approximately 400 feet from Miller Creek but requires an AP at this point in time due to the ground not being frozen. Any sediment created during this skid trail crossing has the adjacent wetland to offer filtration of surface water before entering Miller Creek. All action alternatives would have short term turbidity impacts to the stream. Mitigation measures would protect water quality and the integrity of the SMZ. The landowner prefers to construct a low impact skid trail and apply Forestry BMPs to minimize impacts to the stream wich improved management options.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced (i.e. particulate matter from road use or harvesting, slash pile burning, prescribed burning, etc)? Identify the Airshed and Impact Zone (if any) according to the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to air quality.

Normal air pollution that is associated with a standard logging operation.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to vegetation.

No rare, sensitive plants or cover types were observed during ground reconnaissance. Minimal vegetation disturbance would occur from logging

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The site of the proposed alternative practice shows no significant use by wildlife, birds or fish.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

Threatened or endangered species such as lynx and grizzly bears may migrate through the area. There were no denning sites noted on the property. The proposed wetland crossing should not diminish habitat elements for these species.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources were observed during field reconnaissance nor are any known by the landowner.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Normal temporary noise increase associated with logging operations and the prescription for harvesting the island is the same as surrounding property, so treatments would appear uniform across the ownership.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No limited resources will be used for this project. There are no other activities nearby that will affect the project.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

No other environmental documents are known for this tract. The surrounding USFS property is currently under contract to be harvested (Miller-West Fisher timber sale).

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Normal Health risks associated with a logging operation.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The project will add a minor amount of additional timber to the local wood products industry.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to the employment market.

This project would add 1-2 days of additional work and income to the local work force.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Minor additional income tax revenue would be generated from the additional work.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There would not be any affects to the local government services.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There is no known zoning or management planning for this area.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This activity would have no impact to access to or quality of recreational and wilderness activities for the public.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to population and housing.

This activity would have no impact to density or distribution of population and housing.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Logging is an activity that would be considered a traditional lifestyle for this community and area; this activity would not disrupt social structures.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

Cultural uniqueness and diversity would not be affected.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

There are no unique social or economic qualities on this site.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Jeremy Rank	**Date:**	8/2/2019
	Title:	Service Forester		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative 2 is selected. Construct temporary crossing to skid logs from island across 20 feet of wetland to landing and obliterate crossing after use by grass seeding and mulching with straw.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

All action alternatives have the potential to have short term turbidity impacts to the adjacent wetland. Alternative 2 proposes to both minimize these impacts while still allowing management activities to proceed. The application of forestry BMPs will minimize impact to water quality.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐ EIS ☐ More Detailed EA ☐ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Douglas Turman		
	Title:	Libby Unit Manager		
Signature:	Douglas Turman		**Date:**	8/6/19